THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. VALLABHBHAI RAMJIBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) to (d) In the 10th Plan proposals for development of Higher Education in India, submitted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development to the Planning Commission, improvement in the quality of Higher Education teaching and research has been, *inter-alia*, recognised as one of the thrust areas. To tackle the specific problem areas in Indian Higher Education system, it is proposed to, *inter-alia*, achieve quality in teaching and research. There is, however, no proposal of the Government to set up a National Commission to go into the ramifications of the problems, if any.

Failure of examination system

1789. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the new-item "Examination system is flawed" appearing in the Hindustan Times dated the 27th January, 2003;

(b) if so, whether despite numerous experts committee reports, and analysis made by educationalists and academicians, the examination system continues to be as flawed as it was, branding any one scoring a certain percentage of marks as "failure"; leaving a trail of suicides by students year after years; and

(c) what steps have been taken to introduce a grade based marking system and to bring about other examination reforms?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. VALLABHBHAI RAMJIBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As examination reform is an ongoing process, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) as a pace setting National Board, has been continuously taking measures to reform the examination system in pursuance of the reports and recommendations made by various expert committees and commissions from time to time.

(c) Some of the major steps taken by the CBSE are as follows:

(i) Introduction of 9-point scale grading system alongwith numerical score.

(ii) Development of designs and blue prints and use of marking schemes to familiarize the teachers and students about the nature of the questions and the question papers.

(iii) Publication of sample question papers.

(iv) Introduction of multiple sets of question papers.

(v) Introduction of comprehensive and continuous school based evaluation.

(vi) Elimination of overall aggregation of marks.

(vii) Three chances of compartment examination are provided for class X and XII with the facility of compartment in two subjects in class X and one in class XII.

I.T. Institute in Uttaranchal

1790. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal for opening of an Information Technology Institute in Uttaranchal; and

(b) if so, by when this Institute is proposed to be opened and the location therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. VALLABHBHAI RAMJIBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

Plight of children

1791. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether even after independence 40 per cent boys and over 50 per cent girls remain unenrolled in schools in primary stage itself;

(b) whether with an estimated 100 million, India has the highest number of working children in the world;

(c) whether Indian child has to survive and grow in an environment that is not child friendly; and